

Salina Helvetica and Basel Irish Club present:

The Sea Inside Us

**Artist Ruth E Lyons with live musical performance by
Doimnic Mac Giolla Bhríde, Frances Morton, Aodhán Gavigan**

Film and live sean-nós music unite for a one-off event,
connecting Ireland's arts with the industrial and geological heritage of Basel

Salina Helvetica, Schweizerhalle, Pratteln
18:15 - 20:30, Thursday 1st October 2026



“Lyons's work encompasses the true definition of ‘awe.’”

— Julie Morrissy, writer

On Thursday evening 1 October 2026, Salina Helvetica and Basel Irish Club host a landmark cultural event at Schweizerhalle - Pratteln's iconic salt processing site in operation since 1837, presenting Irish artist Ruth E Lyons' acclaimed debut film *The Sea Inside Us* (2025), together with a live performance by the musicians who composed its original score.

Journeying across the site's production facilities to Schweizerhalle's salt mountain housed in a purpose-built wooden hall, the event brings the audience into direct, physical contact with the film's subject: the vast Zechstein Sea, an ancient body of salt water whose geological seam stretches from Ireland to Russia, and which Lyons has spent over a decade tracing through collaboration with salt mines across Europe.

This venue is also important to the project because of the origin of the location's name "Schweizerhalle" (meaning: Swiss Hall); it is believed that "hall" is an ancient Celtic word for salt.

This October 1st event at Schweizerhalle is one of two Swiss dates this year by Lyons and her artistic collaborators, it's followed by an afternoon event at Salina Helvetica's Mines de Sel de Bex site in Kanton Vaud on 3rd October 2026. The tour is produced by Basel-based Irish curator Emer Lynch, supported by Salina Helvetica, Basel Irish Club, The Embassy of Ireland in Switzerland and Culture Ireland.

"Ruth E Lyons is an artist of exceptional sensitivity and vision whose film *The Sea Inside Us* demonstrates the strength of contemporary Irish interdisciplinary practice. The live score is fundamental, bringing extraordinary depth through musicianship grounded in traditional Irish music of the highest calibre. Together, the film and live performance create a powerful and immersive work."

– Kate Strain, CEO and Artistic Director, Kunstverein Auhgrim

What is food without salt? Food without flavour? Life without emotion?

The Sea Inside Us (digital film, 2025, 23 minutes), follows Lyons into salt mines hundreds of metres underground and across snow-capped alpine mountain ranges, using salt as a lens to explore deep time, industry and the human relationship to the sea. The film was shot on location at the artist's home on Ireland's Atlantic coast, in Northern Ireland, Sicily, and at Salina Helvetica's multiple sites in Switzerland, including at Schweizerhalle itself, making this screening a homecoming to one of the film's principal locations.

The film's original score, composed by sean-nós singer Doimnic Mac Giolla Bhríde, will be performed live by Mac Giolla Bhríde alongside an ensemble of Irish musicians, in addition to new lyrical pieces created for the tour. Their music, rooted in traditional Irish song and drawn from the Donegal Gaeltacht, is integral to the film.

Further insight into the film's origins is provided by an artists' in-conversation taking place during the event, as well as pieces from Lyons' sculptural series 'Salarium' presented in situ. These abstract vessels, held within the permanent collections of The National Gallery of Ireland and Arts Council of Ireland, are the focus of the artist's new book of the same title. Hand-carved from rock salt sourced from European mines, the vessels make the ancient Zechstein Sea tangible—as an enduring connection that transcends modern borders and nation states. At the same time, while geologists contemplate the end of the Holocene, 'Salarium' (spanning 250 BCE to the present) reflects on human legacy and the transience of economic values throughout history.

Event information

What: 'The Sea Inside Us' — film screening, live music, onsite tour and artistic exchange at Schweizerhalle

Who: Artist Ruth E Lyons, musicians Doimnic Mac Giolla Bhríde, Frances Morton, Aodhán Gavigan

Presented by: Salina Helvetica and Basel Irish Club

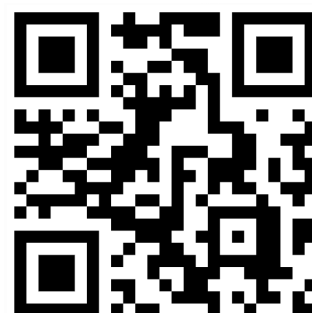
When: 18:15 - 20:30, Thursday 1st October 2026

Where: Besuchszentrum Salina Helvetica, Rheinstrasse 51d, 4133 Pratteln, [Google Maps location](#)

Getting there: Limited parking available onsite.

Public transport: Bus 80 or 81. Direction: Liestal. Name of stop: Pratteln, Saline (20 min from Aeschenplatz).

Admission: [Book your ticket via www.baselirishclub.org](http://www.baselirishclub.org), or scan the the QR code:
CHF 25 for Basel Irish Club members, CHF 35 for non-members



Entry fee includes film screening, live music performance, onsite tour of Schweizerhalle, and apéro provided by Salina Helvetica to conclude the event.

Accessibility: As this event takes place inside a salt processing site, please wear closed shoes. For safety reasons, event participants must have full mobility as unfortunately it's not possible to bring mobility aids onsite.

Language: The event will be in English.

Documentation Please note that the event will be documented using still photography for archival and promotional purposes.

Press assets

High-resolution images, the film's trailer and more information on the artists are available from our press kit folder: <https://tinyurl.com/27vrrcvm>

For press enquires, please contact: Emer Lynch, touring@kunstverein.ie, +41 78 209 0767

Project funders and supporters

This event is kindly supported by Salina Helvetica, Basel Irish Club and Culture Ireland.



Cultúr Éireann
Culture Ireland

Notes to editors

About *The Sea Inside Us*

The Sea Inside Us (2025, Ireland, 23 minutes) is the debut film by artist Ruth E Lyons, made in collaboration with cinematographer Colm Hogan.

There is the remains of an ancient ocean under the countries of northern Europe, a bed of salt that extends from Ireland to Russia. For ten years Lyons has been tracing this seam making carvings from rock salt of various colours. The film follows the artist into mines 300 metres underground, and across the snow-capped peaks of vast mountain ranges. Against these epic backdrops salt becomes a prism through which she formulates questions that fathom the unknowable while reaching for the eternal. The film is shot in sites of salt production in Northern Ireland, Switzerland and Sicily and at the artist's coastal home in the west of Ireland.

Film credits

Directed and Produced by Ruth E Lyons and Colm Hogan

Written by Ruth E Lyons

Director of Photography: Colm Hogan

Additional camera: Roman Bugovskiy and David Qualter

Original cello music composed and performed by Julia Kent

'Óiche réaltach' and 'Feilimí Cam' composed for the film by Doimnic Mac Giolla Bhríde, performed by Doimnic Mac Giolla Bhríde and Aodhán Gavigan on vocals, Daniel Bodwell on double bass.

Editor: David Qualter

Sound Design: Bob Brennan

Underwater footage: Kevin L Smith

The Sea Inside Us is funded by salt producers Irish Salt Mining, Salines Suisses and Sosalt in addition to the Arts Council Visual Arts Project Award and Kunstverein Aughrim. The project has been kindly supported throughout by EUsalt whom Lyons has been working with since 2014. ruthelyons.com/work

New book: Salarium

In July 2026, Ruth E Lyons launched Salarium, a new book about the poetry of salt. The book documents the artist's salt carvings that make manifest the Zechstein Sea, an ancient sea under Europe. It features text and script from her 2025 film *The Sea Inside Us* made in collaboration with Colm Hogan, alongside essays by poet Julie Morrissy and Dr. Urs Ch. Hofmeier, former CEO of Salina Helvetica (2012-2025). Hardback, designed and edited by Alex Synge. ruthelyons.com

Artists' biographies

Ruth E Lyons is an artist based in Co. Mayo, Ireland. Creating sculptural and multimedia artworks inspired by landscape, the artist works on projects exploring geologic time and questioning humanity's place in the universe. Lyons makes works for galleries and public spaces, ranging from underwater to in the sky and underground. Lyons' work has been exhibited internationally and is included in the collections of the OPW, National Gallery of Ireland and Arts Council of Ireland.

Recent exhibitions include: 'Salarium', Irish Museum of Modern Art, 2026; 'Until You Become Weightless', Kunstverein Aughrim, 2025 - 2026; 'New Perspectives', National Gallery of Ireland, 2021; 'Shaping Ireland', National Gallery of Ireland, 2019; 'Borderlines', Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh and The Edge @ Bath Uni, 2019; 'The Necessity of Art', Grazer Kunstverein, Austria, 2017; 'Forecast of the Next Century', Broad Art Museum, Michigan, 2016; 'Riddle of the Burial Grounds', Extra City, Antwerp, 2016; and 'Follies of Youth', Hepworth Wakefield Gallery, Yorkshire, 2015. She recently realised two major public artworks, Wave Junction, 2023, Quantum Park, Dublin and SUPERUNIFICATION, 2022, Honeypark, Dublin. ruthelyons.com

Doimnic Mac Giolla Bhríde is a sean-nós singer who plays uilleann pipes, accordion and piano. He is also a composer and researcher of sean-nós. A native Irish speaker from the Donegal Gaeltacht, Mac Giolla Bhríde began singing at an early age and has gone on to achieve a highly acclaimed career, including winning the prestigious Corn Uí Riada competition in 2009. He has performed at numerous festivals and venues across Ireland, Britain, USA, Japan and Europe. With already five critically acclaimed albums, he has recently launched an album and book outlining the origins of sean-nós, *Gealach na gCuanta*. Mac Giolla Bhríde has also published three children's songbooks. www.doimnic.com

Frances Morton is a highly acclaimed flute-player from Glasgow. She has won several All-Ireland medals and performed across Ireland and abroad including Isle of Man Festival, Jura Folk Festival and venues across Italy, France and USA. Recently she performed with sean-nós singer Doimnic Mac Giolla Bhríde in concert, for TV productions including *Slí na mBeagloich* with renowned musicians Seamus and Cormac Begley, and with Glorthaí Uladh on TG4 and BBC. Frances also developed her academic research into traditional music and place, gaining her PhD and teaching and researching at several institutions. www.francesmorton.com

Aodhán Gavigan is a music educator, conductor and composer, recently graduating from the TU Dublin conservatoire and Trinity College Dublin. He is also a solo classical tenor under the tuition of Emmanuel Lawler. He has studied musicianship and pre-instrumental programmes at the Kodaly institute, Hungary. A soloist with the Irish Youth Choir, Gavigan is no stranger to the choral scene, having been involved in national choirs from the age of 13. Recently, he won the Corn Cuimneacháin Mhic Cathmhaoi (Irish language singing competition) at the Feis Ceoil Summer Feis festival, Dublin.

Emer Lynch, Producer of the Switzerland-based tour of *The Sea Inside Us*, lives in Basel and is Touring and Distribution Manager with Greywax Dance Company in Bern. Her professional experience ranges from curating independent live event projects to supporting the development of multidisciplinary art and social organisations, including Disrupt Disability Arts Festival CLG (Development Officer, 2024 - present; Non-Executive Director, 2025 - present), AlanJames Burns Studio (Development Officer, 2024 - present) Clonmel Community LGBTQ+ Pride Festival (Committee Member 2022–2025), and aemi – Artists' and Experimental Moving Image (Audience and Programme Development Manager 2019–2023). Previously, she held curatorial roles at the Irish Museum of Modern Art and Project Arts Centre in Dublin.

About the partners

Salina Helvetica: Schweizer Salinen operates Switzerland's state salt production, the country's "white gold", including running the Schweizerhalle site near Basel. Schweizerhalle is Switzerland's founding saltworks, where, since 1837, brine drawn from roughly 200 metres underground has been processed into table, agricultural and de-icing salt. The site combines a modern visitor centre with guided tours through the evaporation works, a hands-on salt-mountain hall, an industrial café and a shop, alongside its own regular public programme.

www.salina-helvetica.ch

Basel Irish Club provides a focal point for Irish people, their families, friends and those interested in all things Irish in the Basel region. Established in 2006, over the years Basel Irish Club has organised an array of public events that promote Irish culture to Swiss and international audiences, from collaborations with the James Joyce Foundation, Ivy Irish Dance Academy and the English Language Theatre in Basel, to regular Ciorcal Comhrá gatherings. www.baselirishclub.org